

To the Worthy Liverymen of the City of LONDON.

†

GENTLEMEN,

THOUGHTS for Slaves; but SPEECH for Britons.

OH that every Heart had a Voice, and every Tongue dare speak! the Language of Ministerial Influence would then decline, and arbitrary Power would weaken, as much debased as contemptible.—The Mind is often fettered by the Insolence of a presumptive Dictator, and the free Laws of an honest Intention frustrated, by the powerful and dark Agents of dignified Unworthiness.—In this Land of Liberty, where the Gale of Freedom should blow as equally fresh as the Northern Breeze, is it not astonishing to find that Englishmen should so much forget their Charter, as to deserve the Forfeiture of it? Well may the Scottish Minister boast of Power, when England permits him to sport with her noblest Prerogative: Well, indeed, may he presume to a Formation of Laws of his own Character and Complexion, when the Chief Magistrate of a great City will dare to trample on the Rights and Liberties of the BRITISH Subjects. If Liberty is the Object of a Freeman, whoever violates that noble Existence, is most undoubtedly guilty of a Crime that Nature must blush at, and Mercy never shine on: It is an Arrogance fit for a Tyrant, and a Cruelty becoming a NERO.

I must now demand of an Honourable and Courtier-qualified Lord-Mayor, what he means by, or how he could have, the coxcomical Resolution of insolently rejecting the Nomination of his own City returned by the Sheriffs; more particularly so, when he was very nigh being excluded himself? I would ask him, if he has not betrayed an uncommon Share of Vanity, and testified an amazing Proof of Ignorance? I must tell him, that his flagrant Behaviour is notoriously observed, and I hope will not pass with Impunity; but that future Times will instruct him, that Modesty is the Beauty of Youth; and that an old Man follows the Paths of Experience.—Every true ENGLISH HEART is happy in the Return of the long-suffering Mr. WILKES; and, as the Voice of the People is the natural Impulse of the Mind, there is more Pleasure in the free Enjoyment of those Expressions which come from the Heart, than the compelled Obedience, and struggled Smiles, to a tyrannical Order signed by JOHN BODINGTON, or the wealthy Interest of a DESPISED PEER.—WILKES has lost his Election—I congratulate him upon it—and sincerely wish the other Candidates as much Happiness in their own Breasts, as he enjoys by his few but valuable Voters.

MARCH 22, 1768.

C A T O.